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AUTHOR Wylie, Nancy
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ABSTRACT

Evaluation of prior learning for the External Degree Program at Florida International University is described. Efforts in the following areas are presented: (1) implementation and evaluation of the competency-based assessment tool, (2) integration of the assessment process with other processes of the External Degree Program and the entire university, (3) establishment of disciplinary competencies to be used as indicators in the assessment of learning from work experiences, and (4) reconciliation of the assessment process with the need for predetermined competencies in academic disciplines. Emphasis is also given to the characteristics, application, and implications of the standards used in the assessment of student learning. (Author/MV)

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IMPLEMENTING COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR LEARNING

CAEL Institutional Report
Florida International University

Cooperative Assessment of
Experiential Learning

TM006 739

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COOPERATIVE ASSESSMENT OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (CAEL)

is a research and development project involving Educational Testing Service and an Assembly of some 240 institutions of higher education and other educational organizations. Its purpose is to advance understanding and practice in the assessment of experiential learning. Funding was provided initially by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and subsequently by the Ford Foundation, the Lilly Endowment, and the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education.

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CAEL
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CAEL Institutional Report
Florida International University

Implementing Competency-Based Assessment of Prior Learning

Nancy Wylie

CAEL Institutional Reports are prepared at member institutions in cooperation with the CAEL project, and are based upon special projects commissioned by the CAEL Steering Committee. While Institutional Reports reflect the general orientation and types of work priorities determined by the Steering Committee, they are reports of the individual institutions and may reflect practices different from those suggested elsewhere by CAEL.

Cooperative Assessment of Experiential Learning

September 1976

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PREFACE

About the CAEL Operational Models Project

This report is one of a series of institutional reports produced under the auspices of the CAEL Operational Models Project. A few words of background may be useful in helping readers to understand the purpose of the work and the context in which it was undertaken.

CAEL's overall mission is to improve the assessment of experiential learning, but considering how assessment techniques and materials are used in institutions, it is clear that there are many problems of implementation. Assessment does not exist as an isolated process but is embedded in a context of existing academic procedures, policies, and people. The CAEL Steering Committee recognized that if experiential learning is to become an effective part of the curriculum, it is critical to develop sound procedures for integrating the assessment process into the traditional academic structure.

The Operational Models Project was conceived in response to that need. It was supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education in July 1975. The basic plan was to select 12 institutions facing rather different implementation problems and to provide a cooperative context for each to devote special attention to its particular concern. Some have focused on the problem of defining standards--an issue that lies at the heart of most educational questions that arise with respect to a new program. Other institutions have focused upon the problem of financing learning and assessment programs--an issue that lies at the heart of most administrative questions that arise with respect to a new program.

Each institutional team has worked toward clarification and documentation of desirable policies and working procedures for incorporating the assessment of experiential learning into the fabric of its own institution; i.e., an improved operational model. This report is one of the products. In order to enhance the dissemination and utilization of this work, each institution producing an operational model has held or will hold a local "dissemination workshop" for interested institutions in its immediate area. In addition, the institutions held national workshops at the fall 1976 CAEL Assembly meeting.

Even though the 12 institutions participating in this project were selected partly because they faced different implementation problems, there is necessarily a good deal of commonality of interest and overlap in the issues of greatest concern. As a consequence, it sometimes happens that the same issue or assessment practice is discussed in several reports from a somewhat different point of view. From the perspective of someone reading the entire series, some points may appear to be repeated unnecessarily, but there is value in noting the manner in which a general approach is adapted in different situations. Furthermore, it was felt more important to have each institutional report stand on its own than to artificially edit out discussion of an essential aspect of an assessment system simply because that aspect is reflected in the work of more than one institution. The authors have, however, tried to focus their attention on the unique aspects of their programs so that this series can have a maximum benefit to other institutions.

The Florida International University Operational Model

Florida International University is an urban, multi-ethnic, upper-division public institution. It opened its doors to 5,000 students in the Fall of 1972; enrollment will have tripled by Fall of 1976. FIU has a College of Arts and Sciences, and Schools of Health and Social Services, of Business and Organizational Sciences, of Technology, of Education, and of Hotel, Food and Travel Services. The university has three major purposes: the education of students, service to the community, and fostering greater understanding on the international scene.

The External Degree Program was established at FIU by unanimous resolution of the Board of Regents in 1972. The Program was enrolling students before the doors to the university's traditional programs had opened. Policy makers at FIU established the External Degree Program as a priority of the new university and supported it to develop at pace with its traditional programs. This support at the highest administrative levels has paved the way for a comparatively quick and obstacle-free integration of the External Degree Program with other academic and administrative units.

The Program is a self-directed, largely off-campus program for residents throughout the State of Florida. It provides alternative and individualized paths to the degrees offered through the university's traditional programs. Each student's degree program builds on the recognition and assessment of learning derived from nonsponsored, life/work experiences that bear directly on his or her educational objectives.

Following the assessment of prior learning, the student completes the degree program through independent study, equivalency testing, and classroom courses at any college or university in the state. A student may enter the program at any time during the year and complete the program at his or her own pace.

The External Degree Program employs no faculty of its own, but contracts on an overload compensation basis with individual faculty members from traditional schools of the university to work on a one-to-one basis with students. The program has 150 currently-enrolled students and has graduated 350. The majority of the graduates are in the disciplines of Social Work, Criminal Justice, Health Science, and Liberal Studies. Most External Degree students use the program to advance professionally or to obtain the necessary credentials for graduate study.

This report presents the results of FIU's efforts to (a) implement and evaluate its competency-based assessment tool; (b) complete a systems analysis expressing the integration of the assessment process with other processes of the External Degree Program and the university as a whole; (c) establish disciplinary competencies to use as indicators in the assessment of learning from work experiences; and (d) devise means by which the competency-based assessment process can be reconciled with the need for predetermined competencies in academic disciplines. Equal emphasis is given to the characteristics, application, and implications for the educational process of the standards used in the assessment of student learning.

The substance of all CAEL work at FIU is carried out by the CAEL Research Committee, a standing body composed of faculty, administrators, a representative of the Office of Institutional Research, and a graduate of the External Degree Program. The Committee was particularly active in relation to the issues of identification and application of standards, and the

integration of the competency-based assessment process with the needs of the academic units.

The Committee is composed of the following persons:

Steven Altman, Chairperson, Division of Management, School of Business and Organizational Sciences

Barry Greenberg, Assistant Director, Institutional Research

Charles Divita, Jr., Dean, Continuing Education and Special Programs

David Liebman, Assistant Professor, Health Science Program

Peter Meyer, Co-Chairperson, Professor, Social Work Program

Jules Pagano, Dean, Program Development and Evaluation

Dabney Park, Jr., Director, External Degree Program

Regina Shearn, Associate Professor, Criminal Justice Program

Julia Nooe, Assistant Professor, Social Work Program

Nancy Wylie, Co-Chairperson, Program Specialist, Department of Conferences and Short Courses

I. INTRODUCTION

Objectives of the Project

The Operational Models Project at Florida International University (FIU) was viewed by its participants as an opportunity to build upon work undertaken during an earlier phase of the CAEL Project.

During the Special Project phase, a committee composed of faculty, administrators, a student, and staff members of the External Degree Program developed an instrument for identifying and assessing generic, cognitive competencies derived by students from prior work experiences. Called the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet, the instrument was designed to enable a faculty evaluator to identify individual competencies, to describe different levels of those competencies, and to assess the degree of mastery of the competencies by the use of a rating scale.

The resulting set of competencies, as set forth in the summary portion of the evaluation packet, was to serve as the basis for determining the degree to which a student had met his or her educational objectives through prior learning and to indicate what additional learning should be included in a program of individualized study leading to the baccalaureate degree.

At the close of the Special Project phase, the use of the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet as an assessment technique in the External Degree Program had been limited. Under the aegis of the Operational Models Project, the CAEL Research Committee at FIU set the following objectives: (a) To establish the use of the Evaluation Packet as the sole technique for assessment in all disciplines participating in the External Degree Program; (b) to instruct faculty evaluators in its appropriate use; (c) to measure its effectiveness in accurately assessing the learning outcomes of work experiences; and (d) to study its impact on the combined process of expert judgment and negotiation, which was the established means of assessing the prior learning of students.

In addition, the Committee chose to study the development and application of standards used throughout the External Degree process from the point of inquiry to the time of graduation. The Committee was determined to identify standards currently in use, to develop new, more appropriate standards where needed, and to add structure to the application of standards in all participating disciplines.

A third concern of the Committee was reconciling an established commitment to acknowledge new learning, brought to the university by students from their prior experiences, with the increasing need of faculty advisors to develop sets of specific competencies within their own disciplines.

This report also deals with an attempt to integrate new assessment techniques into a pre-existing External Degree Program, and to integrate the External Degree experience, for both students and faculty, into the total life of the university.

The Committee has chosen to present its Operational Model in sequential fashion, indicating

the stages through which a student passes from the time of inquiry to the time of graduation. The exposition of that process will set forth the interactions between the student, the External Degree Program, and other units of the university.

The Nature and Application of Standards

The CAEL Research Committee at FIU approached the issue of standards, within the context of the Operational Models Project, from a perspective which may be unique to the FIU program. To integrate discussion of standards and the critical points at which they are applied with the sequential model, it is necessary to define some terms developed by the Committee for its own use.

The Overall System Flow Chart (p. 3) depicts, in sequential order, the processes of the External Degree Program at FIU. The official application of standards ostensibly takes place at the Contract Negotiation stage.

The FIU Committee devoted much of its early work to an attempt to identify the formal standards used in assessing prior learning and to a parallel attempt to relate those standards to academic disciplines within the university. The Committee found that even the most experienced faculty advisors had difficulty articulating the specific standards they used in applying expert judgment to the assessment of student competencies. A strong case was made for the keen perceptual insights, aggregate experience, and "magical powers" of an expert judge in assessing the knowledge and skills of a junior member of his own discipline. The faculty advisors on the Committee stated that, although they used a set of basic indicators in a deliberate way in assessing a student's learning experiences, in large part their decisions were often intuitively determined. As a result, the Committee moved to break down the intuitive processes into measurable clusters of indicators that, it was hypothesized, had been internalized by the expert judges over time and incorporated into intuitive knowledge about disciplines and their practitioners (a process known in committee as "quantifying the magic"). This effort, though commendable, yielded even less information and more frustration than a simple search for overt indicators.

As the Committee focused its attention on what happened in formalized assessment sessions, it eventually became clear that standards, intentional and unintentional, were being applied not only in the context of formal assessment, but throughout the processes leading up to formal assessment, from the time of inquiry on. There was strong feeling that no student would even reach the point of formal assessment if he or she had not first passed successfully through a minefield of hidden standards applied unknowingly during the early stages.

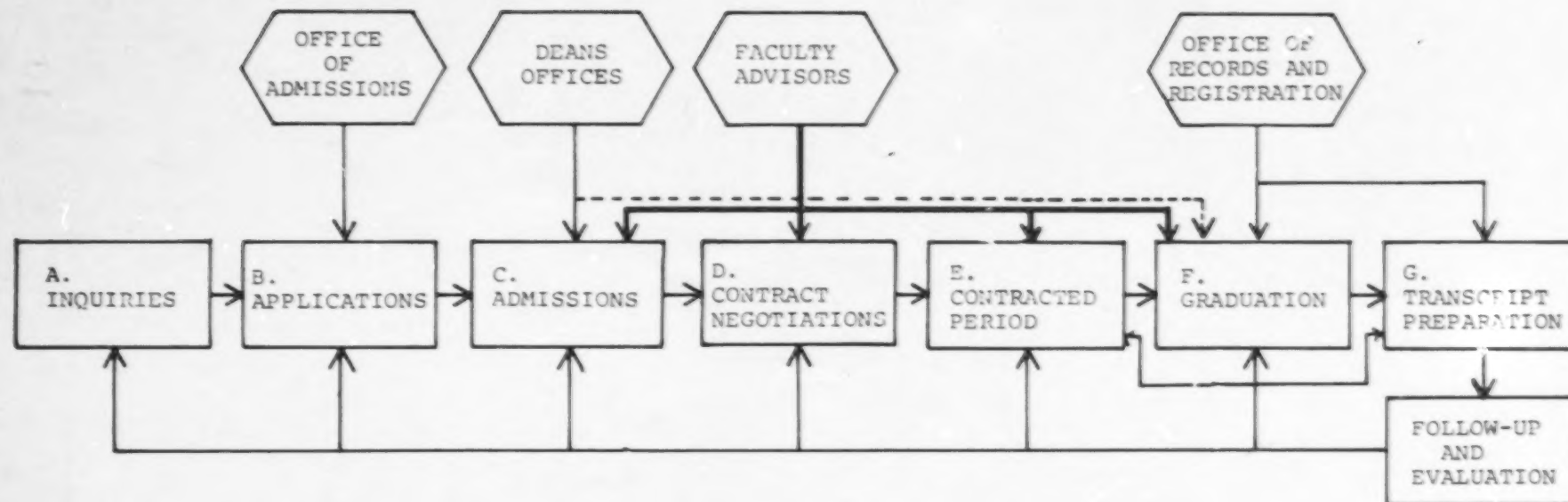
As a result of this serendipitous finding, the FIU Committee has determined that there are two kinds of standards which are applied, and has labeled them *Explicit* and *Implicit* Standards.

There are two features of Explicit Standards. First, an Explicit Standard is one that is known to both assessor and the person being assessed. Examples of Explicit Standards include the passing score on an exam, a code of professional ethics, a set of skills which must be demonstrated (e.g., to obtain a cosmetologist's license), or a set of competencies established as a requirement for a degree in a given discipline.



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM

THE OVERALL SYSTEM



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

The second feature of Explicit Standards is that they are applied within the context of formal assessment. For example, when a student completes a test and waits for the instructor to grade it, both know that formal standards are being applied. By the same token, for example, candidates for a cosmetologist's license know as they demonstrate their skills under observation that formal assessment is taking place.

Implicit Standards may be said to be the opposite of Explicit Standards. The first feature of an Implicit Standard is that its nature is not consciously known. Implicit Standards are incorporated into the intuitive, subjective judgments made by expert judges, as exemplified by the advisor in the Social Work Program who, after twenty years, "knows a social worker when he sees one."

The second feature of an Implicit Standard is that it is often applied outside the context of formal assessment without the conscious knowledge of the student or the person making a judgment. The Committee identified several stages in the processes of the External Degree Program where Implicit Standards might be applied and have some bearing on the final outcome of the process. These include Inquiry, Admissions, Contract Negotiation, and Graduation.

A student who visits the External Degree Program office to make an inquiry may or may not impress the receptionist by the way he or she states questions. The receptionist's impressions may then affect the way she introduces the student to a counselor, conveying an unintentional negative or positive message. In turn, the degree to which the student is articulate in describing his or her learning objectives to the counselor may play a disproportionate role in the counselor's decision to encourage the student to apply, or to refer him or her to the traditional programs. If the student and portfolio are referred to a faculty advisor, the advisor may unknowingly be influenced in his or her decisions by the student's writing ability, self-presentation, or unease in the interview situation--issues which may have no bearing on the student's competence in the chosen discipline.

The Committee acknowledges that Implicit Standards are applied throughout the process as described above, but it has placed no value judgment on the findings. Instead, the Committee is studying both Implicit and Explicit Standards in an attempt to establish when, where, and by whom they are applied, and the degree to which they may negatively or positively affect the outcome of the student's interaction with the program.

There is an additional dimension to the notion of Implicit Standards. The Committee feels that Implicit Standards comprise the positive intuitive guidelines followed by faculty advisors in assessing candidates for the External Degree Program. By studying Implicit Standards and the role they play in the interaction between assessor and student, the Committee hopes that more can be learned about expert judgment, what it is made of, and how it works.

II. THE LEARNING PROCESS

A. INQUIRIES

Students learn about the External Degree Program as an available option from a variety of sources, such as advisors at the community college, faculty members from other units of the university, former students, and the university catalog. The system designed to handle inquiries calls for them to be channeled through the Admissions Counselor in the External Degree Program office, where the first critical decisions about a student are likely to be made. However, many students circumvent this process by going directly to faculty members affiliated with the External Degree Program. Some request applications without asking for information or counseling.

Ideally, a student who wishes to be a candidate for the External Degree Program talks with the counselor to determine his or her educational objectives, past learning experiences, preferred learning style, and whether he or she has met the basic requirements for admission to the program. At this stage, the counselor can make two basic judgments: first, whether the student has met the basic requirements for admission to the university (an A.A. degree from an accredited community college or its equivalent); and second, whether the student has the capacity for self-directed study, the ability to articulate learning objectives well enough to be an active participant in the development of his or her own learning design, and whether the student's needs can be met by the resources of the university.

This is one stage where both Explicit and Implicit Standards are applied. The Explicit Standards are the university's fixed admissions policies. Implicit Standards are likely to be applied in the subjective judgments the counselor makes about the student's suitability for independent study. Although the counselor may find clues in the student's past experience to indicate whether he or she is a good candidate for independent study, the counselor must often rely, in making a judgment, on information presented in dialogue with the student and the way he or she behaves in the interview.

The counselor has the option of referring the student to the next stage in the process, thus encouraging application to the External Degree Program, or suggesting that he or she might find success in a traditional program of the university. Students who are referred out of the program may accept the counselor's judgment, or apply for admission to the External Degree Program to be considered without prejudice.

B. APPLICATIONS

The Application phase is the first process in which another administrative unit of the university is involved. A student applying for admission to the External Degree Program completes a large packet of materials, which comprise a basic portfolio. This includes the standard Application for Admission to the university, since any potential External Degree student is required to meet the basic standards for admission to the university in order to qualify for admission to the External Degree Program.

In addition to the university's basic application form, the External Degree Application

Packet includes informational material and several other forms. The entire packet, when completed, is sent to the Office of Admissions.

Descriptions of Work

The packet contains several copies of a form entitled, "Educational Work Experiences: Descriptions of Work." The student completes one form for each educational work experience from which credit is to be derived. The completed form provides information about the student, field of study, title of the position, dates of employment, name and title of the immediate supervisor, and a detailed narrative description of the student's work. An application may contain as many "Description of Work" forms as the student feels are necessary to describe separate work experiences.

Letters of Recommendation

The Packet also includes two "Letter of Recommendation" forms. The student sends these to two persons who can lend support to his or her candidacy for self-directed study. The person serving as a reference rates the student at four levels from excellent to poor in the areas of acceptance of responsibility, leadership, conduct as a professional, and ability to work independently. A request is made for any additional narrative comments that would provide the Admissions Officer with useful information on which to base a judgment.

The student is advised to include a personal resume, certificates of completion for noncredit activities, documentation of honors, awards and elected offices, licenses held, and membership in professional organizations.

The materials, which comprise the student's portfolio, are kept in the Admissions Office of the university until the necessary documentation has been received. When the student's transfer credits have been evaluated and state residency established, the Admissions Office notifies the student that he or she has been formally accepted for admission to the university. Xerox copies of all his or her application materials are then sent to the External Degree Program for evaluation.

C. ADMISSION TO THE EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM

While the External Degree Program employs no faculty members directly, there are three disciplines within the university which, when combined, represent the highest concentration of student enrollment by discipline. These are Social Work, Health Science, and Criminal Justice. In each of these departments, there is a full-time faculty member who deals exclusively with External Degree students. Their offices are located within their academic departments, and they are accountable to their department chairpersons and to the Dean of the School of Health and Social Services as well as to the Director of the External Degree Program. They participate in External Degree Program staff meetings, contribute to long-range planning and decision making for the External Degree Program, and are members of the CAEL Research Committee.

The materials of students whose major fields fall in these three areas are sent directly to the appropriate faculty member for evaluation. A separate system for Admissions has been

determined for the remainder of the academic disciplines.

Each school or major program of the university has a person designated as Admissions Officer for the External Degree Program. In most cases, that person is the Associate Dean of the School. In the case of the larger programs, department chairpersons may fill that role.

When the External Degree Program is notified that a student has been accepted by the university and receives copies of his or her application materials, the application is forwarded with a formal request for admission to the Admissions Officer of the School in question. The Admissions Officer in the academic unit is responsible for determining whether the student will be accepted as an External Degree student in the discipline of his or her choice. The greatest variety of both Explicit and Implicit Standards are applied to students at this critical stage of admission to the External Degree Program.

Among the Explicit Standards which may be appropriately applied are such questions as: Does the student have the appropriate lower-division academic background to allow for success in independent study in this field? Do his or her lower-division grade-point average and transcript indicate a level of academic achievement that suggests potential for success? Do his or her past work experiences indicate the probability that he or she has practical knowledge that may not be represented in the official transcript? Is there a faculty member who is both appropriate and willing to work with this student?

Individual academic programs may have specific prerequisites which are not part of the standards for admission to the university. Such prerequisites apply in the decision to admit a student to the External Degree Program in that discipline just as they would for a student choosing the traditional path.

In some academic units the Admissions Officer may apply standards based on personal or departmental philosophy about experiential learning. These are still considered Explicit Standards by our prior definition, but they are frequently standards that might be regarded as negative in the External Degree Program office. For example, an Admissions Officer may apply the standard that a student who can meet his or her learning objectives through the traditional program of the university and chooses External Degree by preference rather than out of necessity shall not be admitted to the External Degree Program. In some cases, this decision arises from a shortage of available faculty members and represents a positive attempt to make certain that faculty advisors are available to students who must rely on the External Degree Program to complete their educations. In other cases, however, this decision may be predicated on a desire to increase enrollment within the traditional program.

Although the External Degree Program has enjoyed full support from the university administration, there are varying degrees of commitment to and enthusiasm for the concept of the External Degree among faculty members and chairpersons throughout the university. As a result, it is possible for someone who is dubious about the program to be designated Admissions Officer by the Dean of his or her School. In that event, it is possible that negative Implicit standards may be applied to students. A rejection can result based on the Implicit Standards of the Admissions Officer under the guise of a more acceptable Explicit Standard, such as the unavailability of a faculty member to work with the student. In addition, some Admissions Officers may have

arbitrary biases about the conditions necessary for success in an External Degree Program. Some Admissions Officers will not accept students who do not live within a specified distance from the campus, using a rationale that there are geographical limits within which off-campus, nonresidential, independent study may be conducted.

A few programs accept External Degree students rarely, or not at all. The School of Education at FIU has yet to accept the External Degree method as an acceptable mode of teacher training. The School of Business and Organizational Sciences is increasing the number of students it accepts, but has been slow in developing its commitment to the concept of independent study. The variety of disciplines participating and the varying levels of personal and departmental commitment to experiential learning, combined with the fact that the majority of the traditional faculty members were not specifically trained to assess prior learning or to design independent study programs, makes further study of Explicit and Implicit Standards, as applied by Admissions Officers, a priority of the CAEL Research Committee.

The Admissions Officer system was designed to replace two previous methods of creating linkages with academic units. Prior to the designation of Admissions Officers, one method of getting a student accepted by an academic program was to refer his or her application packet directly to an individual faculty member. In such cases, the Department Chairman (or Dean of the School) sometimes perceived that faculty members were receiving assignments without his or her prior approval and control. Another option was to bring the application material directly before the Dean. Deans frequently delegated the responsibility for passing judgment on student applications to members of the faculty. At that point, it was common for the External Degree Program to lose track of the student's application and not to know who was responsible for making the final judgment about the admission of the student. Designating an Admissions Officer for every major program or school has improved the ability to track the location, status, and assigned responsibility for each student's materials.

When the Admissions Officer system was designed, Admissions Officers were to function within the context of an Admissions Committee based in the External Degree Program Office rather than the academic unit. The Admissions Committee was to be composed of the Admissions Officer of the academic unit involved, the Admissions Counselor of the External Degree Program, the student, and a community practitioner when appropriate. Such a system would add the element of active student participation at the critical stage of admission, provide the External Degree Program with a built-in check on the nature of standards applied by the academic units, and allow the Admissions Counselor to act as an advocate for the student and an interpreter for the External Degree Program. The need for an appeals process for students who were not accepted would decrease, since students would be present to plead their own cases.

The Admissions Committee system was designed during the early stages of the Operational Models Project but has not yet been implemented. Intermittent shortages of External Degree Program staff have required existing staff members to fulfill multiple roles within already established systems. Implementation of this plan is expected to bring the decision-making processes of the academic units under tighter control and to provide an opportunity to educate faculty members in the philosophy and practices of experiential learning.

If the Admissions Officer decides not to accept the student, the request form, indicating the decision and reasons is returned to the External Degree Program. The External Degree Program, in turn, notifies the student that he or she either has not been accepted or has been accepted in principle but cannot begin work until a faculty member is available to work with him or her. The student has the right of appeal and may request a meeting with an External Degree Department Counselor and the Admissions Officer to present his or her own case.

If, instead, the student is accepted by the Admissions Officer, the latter indicates acceptance and designates the faculty advisor who will assess prior learning, develop and supervise independent study programs, and certify the student for graduation upon completion of his or her program. The Admissions Officer then returns the request form to the External Degree Program Office, where a contract is prepared specifying the duties of the faculty advisor and the compensation to be received. The External Degree Program staff then notifies the student of his or her acceptance and the name of his or her faculty advisor.

Once the student has been accepted by the academic unit governing his or her discipline, the Applications and Admissions phase has been completed. The next phase of the External Degree process is Assessment and Contract Negotiation.

D. CONTRACT NEGOTIATION

There are two major phases of the Contract Negotiation process. The first is the assessment of the student's prior learning from work experiences. The second is the development of a program of individualized study that builds on the student's prior learning and describes how he or she will complete the remaining degree requirements.

The Assessment of Prior Learning

During the first two years of operation of the External Degree Program, the prevailing means of assessment of prior learning was a combination of expert judgment by the faculty advisor and negotiation between the faculty advisor and the student. Once the faculty advisor had reviewed the student's basic data forms, they would meet to discuss not only what the student had done in the past, but also what he or she had learned from the experiences. In the interview sessions, which were generally kept private and informal, the student could expand on what had been presented in his or her written documents. These sessions provided opportunities for the student to indicate learning objectives, give reasons for choosing an External Degree program, and tell how he or she felt his or her past experiences and what had been learned from them might bear on his or her future work and academic program. The faculty advisor, chosen because of expertise in the student's field, could explore with the student each of his or her work experiences and, using interviewing skills, identify evidence of learning derived from the work experiences. The student and the faculty advisor would also consider relevant continuing education, in-service training provided by employers, and other life experiences which could be related directly to the student's degree program.

Although it was sometimes possible for the student and the faculty advisor to discuss work experiences, identify learning outcomes, and negotiate an appropriate award of credit in one

session, the student and the faculty advisor would meet as often as necessary to reach agreement on these issues.

Expert judgment and documentation of learning experiences as the primary means of determining the credit award for individual students led directly to a number of problems. First, it was not unusual for the student or the faculty advisor to become confused by the distinction between awarding credit for learning from work experiences and awarding credit for the experiences themselves. Since there was no standard formula for determining the award of credit, the faculty advisor was responsible for determining the amount of learning an individual student had gained from a given work experience. Students of the same discipline sometimes felt they were not receiving an equitable award of credit for work they had accomplished over 15 or 20 years. If a small award of credit was given, it was generally because the faculty advisor felt that the majority of those years were spent using knowledge and repeating skills acquired during the first one to five years of employment. This concept was extremely difficult for students to accept. The problem was compounded if another student in the same discipline, who had worked for fewer years, received more credits than the first student. If both students had been assessed by the same faculty advisor, the discrepancy could normally be explained by the advisor's judgment that the second student had learned more than the first student, and was able to demonstrate that learning in the negotiation process. If, however, the student who received the lesser award of credit had been assessed by another faculty member in the same discipline, the assessment process was vulnerable to the suggestion that there might be insufficient standardization in both policy and procedure for converting learning outcomes to an award of credit, and for documenting the rationale for awarding credit.

The administrators of the External Degree Program and the faculty advisors involved began to seek methods by which they would standardize and put identifiable controls on the processes they used to award credit, and at the same time preserve the flexibility inherent in the use of expert judgment in the assessment of what a student knows and can do as a result of prior experience. During the Special Projects phase of the CAEL Project, FIU was awarded funds to work toward those goals. The CAEL Research Committee at FIU established the following objectives: (a) to develop a taxonomy for evaluating generic, cognitive competencies that are common to many work situations, and (b) to develop methods of describing and evaluating competencies that comprise the taxonomy for a given student.

The move toward competency-based assessment of prior learning had a number of values for the FIU program. First, it would afford all assessors a standard means by which to identify the learning outcomes of work experiences while still using expert judgment in identifying those outcomes. Learning outcomes could be converted into specific measurable competencies that could then be valued in relation to the student's goals, the educational objectives of the degree program, and the eventual demands of a professional discipline. The system provided a quantifiable way to express expert judgment and to justify an award of credit. The use of competency statements to define a student's prior learning was expected to be an excellent means of discrepancy evaluation, to identify what the student still had to learn prior to graduation as measured against what he or she already knew and the demands of his or her academic discipline. In addition, it was felt that an assessment method that depended upon competency statements would be

generalizable from one discipline to the next, and that, once trained, faculty advisors throughout the university could develop equal skill in writing and rating competency statements.

The principal product of the work of the FIU committee is the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet, (Appendix A, p. 33), a tool for faculty members to use in identifying cognitive competencies that students have gained in the work place. The Evaluation Packet enables the evaluator to describe different levels of competency according to a taxonomy created for the purpose, and to assess the degree of mastery of the competency attained by the use of a rating scale. The resulting set of competencies as set forth in the summary portion of the Evaluation Packet may then serve as the basis for determining the degree to which a student has met his or her educational objectives and can be incorporated into an educational contract for further work, as well as into a transcript reflecting the student's educational attainments.

The Evaluation Packet was developed by the CAEL Research Committee at FIU, which was composed of faculty members in Health Science, Social Work, Criminal Justice, and Liberal Studies; representatives of the offices of Institutional Research, Registration and Records, and the External Degree Program; and an External Degree student. A majority of the committee members were engaged daily in assessing the learning outcomes of work experience and awarding appropriate credit.

A systematic review of the literature and the preliminary deliberations of the committee yielded a conviction that Benjamin Bloom's *taxonomy of cognitive competencies*¹ was the most comprehensive conceptual framework for examining competencies that result from educational experiences. Bloom's taxonomy is arranged hierarchically in six levels, with each succeeding level building upon and presuming ability at the previous levels. The Committee found no obvious reason why the application of the taxonomy could not be extended to encompass the unintentional learning outcomes of working, as well as the intentional learning outcomes of traditional education. The Committee felt, however, that Bloom's taxonomy, as presently constituted, presents problems in two areas: its complexity makes it a cumbersome tool for evaluators whose expertise is derived from outside the arena of educational theory, and it does not emphasize, to the degree deemed desirable by the committee, the practical application of its three highest levels--analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Accordingly, the committee revised the six-level taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation), producing a four-level taxonomy of cognitive competencies as follows:

- I. Knowing and Comprehending
- II. Applying Knowledge and Comprehension
- III. Analyzing, Synthesizing, and Evaluating
- IV. Using Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation

The committee felt that the revised taxonomy, with its simplicity and application of concepts already familiar to traditional educators, could be a useful tool for faculty evaluators

¹Bloom, Benjamin S. (Ed.) *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals. Handbook I: Cognitive domain.* New York: David McKay Company, 1956.

of a variety of backgrounds. The committee felt that the taxonomy was consistent with its conviction that the most dependable evidence of the existence of a competency could be inferred from the practical use of that competency in the form of a behavior in the work place. In the revised taxonomy, then, Level I addresses the existence of cognitive competencies in knowing and comprehending, and Level II addresses the practical demonstration of these competencies. Similarly, Level III deals with the presence of another level of ability--analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating--and Level IV is concerned with the practical demonstration of that ability.

The Evaluation Packet combined the revised taxonomy with a new rating scale, which allowed the evaluator to identify competencies and to specify precisely the degree to which the student had demonstrated the competency. In considering a general statement of competency derived from the student's work experience, the evaluator chose one of the following ratings:

1. Has not demonstrated the competency in question.
2. Has demonstrated the competency, but at a below average level.
3. Has demonstrated the competency at an average level.
4. Has demonstrated the competency at an above average level.
5. Has demonstrated the competency at or near the highest level.

A third significant feature of the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet is the Competency Evaluation Summary Form (see p. 13). The form requires the faculty evaluator to summarize the evaluative judgments he or she has made using the revised taxonomy and the rating scale. The Competency Evaluation Summary was intended to allow the evaluator to see at a glance the way in which the specificity of the rating scale could converge with the general competency statements to permit a balanced view of the student's learning experiences and outcomes. The Summary enables the evaluator to determine that he or she has not neglected an area of competency, or combined features of several discrete competencies into one overly general competency statement.

The Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet has been the standard means of assessing prior learning for the External Degree Program for over a year. During that period of trial use, a number of strengths and weaknesses of the system and the forms have emerged.

One strength of the Evaluation Packet is its practical utility for faculty members in assessing prior learning and granting appropriate credit. The system provides both structure and a frame of reference within which decisions may be made. The emphasis on competencies derived from work experiences, rather than on the work experiences themselves, gives the evaluator a sound basis for objective measurement. This enhances the uniformity of assessment from one competency to another for a given student, and from one student to the next within the evaluator's area of responsibility.

A second value of the Evaluation Packet for the faculty member has been the ease with which the Packet lends itself to the process of negotiation with the student. The specification and assessment of discrete, cognitive competencies, which the Packet was designed to facilitate, provide a description of the student's work experiences and the learning derived from them that the student and faculty advisor can share. The availability of such a shared



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EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM COMPETENCY EVALUATION FORM

DATE:

EVALUATOR:

POSITION:

JOB OR COURSE TITLE:

INFORMATION ACQUIRED FROM
THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

- ☐ INTERVIEW
☐ WRITTEN MATERIALS
☐ STUDENT NARRATIVE
☐ THIRD PARTY TESTIMONY
☐ OBSERVATION
☐ WRITTEN TEST

EVALUATOR'S SIGNATURE

STUDENT

MAJOR

GENERAL COMPETENCY		HAS NOT DEMONSTRATED THE COMPETENCY IN QUESTION	HAS DEMONSTRATED THE COMP IN QUESTION AT A BELOW AVERAGE LEVEL	HAS DEMONSTRATED THE COMP IN QUESTION AT AN AVERAGE LEVEL	HAS DEMONSTRATED THE COMP IN QUESTION AT AN ABOVE AVERAGE LEVEL	HAS DEMONSTRATED THE COMP IN QUESTION AT OR NEAR HIGHEST LEVEL
LEVEL OF COMPETENCY:		1	2	3	4	5
I. KNOWS AND COMPREHENDS						
II. CAN APPLY						
III. CAN ANALYZE, SYNTHESIZE, & EVALUATE						
IV. CAN USE ANALYSIS, SYNTHESIS, & EVALUATION						

description improved the depth and quality of negotiations between student and faculty advisor and increased the mutual acceptability of judgments made concerning the eventual award of credit.

The Evaluation Packet had another anticipated advantage--as a diagnostic tool, to point out areas of weakness as well as creditable areas of strength, thus giving the student and the faculty advisor a better sense of what learning remains to be accomplished in order to meet the student's overall educational objectives.

Once the discrepancy between a student's present level of ability and the level of ability desired for him or her is known and evaluated, the design of a Study Plan can focus on the elimination of the identified discrepancies.

Another predicted area of strength of the Evaluation Packet was its apparent generalizability. Early assumptions were that the taxonomy and rating scale would have equal validity for all disciplines in which they would be used, reflecting the concentration on generic rather than expert competencies in the development of the materials. It was expected and has been established that the baseline for objective measurement provided by the Evaluation Packet contributes to a greater degree of uniformity in the award of credit from evaluator to evaluator and from program to program.

When a faculty advisor has agreed to work with the External Degree student, he or she receives copies of all of the basic data forms included in the student's original application for the External Degree Program, and also receives a Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet for that student. The Packet includes instructions for faculty evaluators in the use of the forms; a basic data form which allows the faculty advisor to list the student's employment experiences by job title and organization; a second basic data form which allows the evaluator to list continuing education, noncredit courses and training programs in which the student has participated; and a third basic data form which allows the evaluator to summarize licenses, awards, memberships, and other honors. The Packet also includes a number of Competency Evaluation Forms. The faculty advisor uses one Competency Evaluation Form for each general competency statement he or she makes about the student. First the basic competency statement is indicated and then the level of competency demonstrated for that particular statement, ranging from (1) knowing and comprehending, to (4) using analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The Competency Evaluation form includes the rating scale. The faculty advisor is asked to rate each level of each competency ascribed to the student.

The last form is the Competency Evaluation Summary Form (see p. 15) on which the faculty advisor lists the general competency statements he or she has included in the packet and the rating given to each competency. The totals from the rating scale and for the number of credits awarded are also to be listed on the form.

The original expectation was that the faculty advisor would meet with the student, review his or her portfolio, exercise expert judgment by asking questions designed to elicit the degree of learning derived from each experience, and convert that knowledge into competency statements following the initial interview with the student. The committee was aware that effective use and evaluation of the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet would depend on its uniform and appropriate usage. This would require the mastery of relatively complex concepts and

methods as well as an understanding of the way in which the measurement device would fit into a total assessment process prior to a decision to award credit. If faculty evaluators were not at ease with the techniques or confident about the potential value of the taxonomy, it was possible that some might write competency statements to support a prior decision made by a more familiar but less clearly defined process thereby making measurement of validity and reliability difficult. The Committee intended to reduce this possibility by training faculty advisors in the use of the Packet, making them feel comfortable with its use, and demonstrating to the faculty member's satisfaction that the use of the Packet was indeed an improvement over prior methods. These procedures were all contingent upon the assumption that the only appropriate use of the Evaluation Packet was a completely standardized one, allowing for no variation in interviewing style and technique, or the degree of participation in the preparation of competency statements that could be expected from students.

In the early stages of its trial use, this standardized style of utilization was employed throughout the program, and became the standard means of assessment. After a period of time, the faculty advisors began to use the Packet in what may be described as a variety of nonstandard, or unanticipated ways. Rather than adapting their existing assessment methods to the new measurement device, they tended to look for ways to integrate the use of the Packet with the styles of assessment and interviewing with which they were most comfortable and which yielded the best results for them. Here are some ways in which the Packet has been used by faculty advisors and students in the assessment of prior learning.

- I. Professor P, representing the Criminal Justice Program, reviews the student's basic data forms, conducts a series of interviews with the student in which he elicits learning outcomes; excuses the student; and uses his interview notes to write competency statements to be included in the Evaluation Packet. Having written all of the competency statements according to the taxonomy and rated them, he summarizes the competency statements and makes a decision about the credit award. He calls in the student to discuss the competency statements and the ratings. By a process of negotiation, the student participates in modifying the competency statement, or gives additional competencies, or perhaps a higher rating for a competency already identified. When the student and Professor P agree that the competencies and the credit award are appropriate, the Evaluation Packet is forwarded to the External Degree Program office, and Professor P and the student go on to build a program of independent study leading to a degree. This use of the Packet by Professor P is consistent with the expectations of the Committee and could be described as a standard utilization.
- II. Professor E in the Health Science Program uses the Packet somewhat differently. During the interview, Professor E and the student review basic data forms and the Evaluation Packet. The student is taught to use the packet and to write competency statements. Once the student understands that the Packet is the primary means of describing and rating his prior learning, he is then able to review his past work and learning experiences in such a way that he can suggest competencies he has developed to Professor E, and defend the rating he feels should be given to each of his competencies. This information is kept as notes by Professor E and the student is excused. Professor E then reviews the notes, modifies some of the competency statements based on his own judgments, adjusts some of the ratings based on available documentation, completes the Evaluation Packet materials himself, and makes a judgment on the award of credit for prior learning. The student returns, the final packet is reviewed, and if the student accepts the award of credit and the competency statements, they proceed to the next step of contract negotiation. This

is an innovative, unexpected, nonstandard use of the Evaluation Packet which is acceptable to the Committee. Professor E can demonstrate that it yields a better outcome and a more precise award of credit than either the method he used previously, or his use of the Evaluation Packet without the student's participation.

- III. Professor F, in the Liberal Studies Program, is uncomfortable using the Packet. He continues to interview students and make judgments based on his expertise in the field, and the degree to which he can find course equivalents in the university catalog that conform exactly to the student's experience, though this is not a criterion required by the program. He then writes competency statements and ratings to support the judgments he has already made and to justify the credit award he has predetermined. This is regarded as a substandard, record-keeping use of the Packet and is not acceptable to the Committee.
- IV. Professor Q, in the Social Work Program, reviews the written materials and documentation of learning experiences and interviews the student. During the interview he teaches the student to write competency statements about himself and his experiences. When both are confident that the student is comfortable with the process, he is given copies of his written material and the Evaluation Packet, and goes home to complete the Packet. Professor Q makes his own set of notes based on competencies he identified during the interview. When the student completes the Packet, he returns for a second interview to review the results. At that point, Professor Q shares the competency statements he has written with the student, discusses the statements the student has written, and a modified set of competency statements is developed. The two negotiate an award of credit which they believe to be fair, based on the number and level of mastery of the student's competencies. Through this process, the student's prior learning is assessed, he develops skills in analysis, and increases his ability to talk about his knowledge and skills in a new, precise way. This is a nonstandard use of the Evaluation Packet, but it seems to provide substantial benefit to the student and the faculty advisor and is acceptable to the Committee.

These are examples of ways in which the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet is currently used in the External Degree Program. Since one completed Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet tends to look pretty much like another, offering no clues as to who prepared the competency statements or at what stage of assessment the competency statements were developed, it is difficult for the Committee to determine how many adaptations have occurred which have yet to be shared. The Committee is assured by its conversations with faculty advisors that all are now using the Packet in the assessment of prior learning, *before* the decision to award credit, which was the Committee's greatest concern.

Faculty advisors are now being openly urged to use the Packet in new and creative ways, as long as the end product is a series of competency statements that can be evaluated and linked to an award of credit. Early returns indicate that students tend to write better, more precise competency statements about their learning than do faculty advisors. Although this is surely a suitable subject for further study, possible reasons for this phenomenon may include the fact that the student has a high investment in the quality and precision of the competency statements he or she prepares. The student knows that the description of his or her competencies will affect the award of credit for prior learning and the nature of an independent study plan developed on the basis of existing competencies. Another possibility is that regardless of the expertise a faculty member may have in a specific discipline, no one is as familiar with the student's

learning experience and its outcomes as the student him- or herself.

The Committee is aware that encouraging variety in the application of an instrument intended for measurement will make it more difficult to evaluate the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet for reliability and validity as an assessment tool, assuming that measurement for its own sake is the sole objective. The Committee has already been informed by its member from the Office of Institutional Research that as long as competencies vary in size and scope, any attempt to measure them is akin to measuring Jello with a micrometer. Spirited discussion based on that hypothesis ensued, in which some members aligned themselves philosophically with the Jello, and others remained committed to the pure virtues of micrometers. That issue was tabled. Final judgment was made that statistical studies of the effectiveness of FIU's assessment instrument would be secondary to the refinement of an instrument that does the job and allows both students and faculty members maximum flexibility and the recognition of their unique capabilities in carrying out the negotiation process, a cornerstone principle of the External Degree experience at FIU.

Because of these variations in the application of the Evaluation Packet, a student presenting him- or herself for contract negotiation can expect an individualized approach to the assessment of his or her prior learning. The Packet will continue to be the fundamental tool for assessing and placing value upon prior learning. The way in which the Packet is applied will depend upon the philosophy, background, and style of the faculty advisor, and on the degree of the student's need and ability to participate in the writing of competency statements. At this stage in the trial use of the Evaluation Packet, it seems that students will be increasingly involved in writing competency statements about themselves.

Therefore, it can be assumed that the assessment procedure for the average student will involve preliminary review of written materials and documentation by the faculty advisor, one or more interviews with the student about what he or she knows and can do, the development and evaluation of competency statements, and the determination of an award of credit for prior learning based on the set of competencies which comprises the taxonomy for that student.

As a result of the experience of faculty advisors who use students in writing competency statements, the question now facing the Committee is one which could have substantial impact on the philosophy of the External Degree Program, which has traditionally been rooted in work experience and the recognition and development of professional competencies: Should a student's ability to write and talk about what he or she knows and can do be a requirement of a college graduate?

The Educational Contract

The Educational Contract (Appendix B, p. 39) is the third significant set of documents used in working with External Degree students. The first page of the Educational Contract is a summary and clearance sheet. It includes basic data about the student, the inclusive dates of the contract, the College or School in which the student is enrolling, and his or her anticipated degree, major, and area of concentration. The next section itemizes the sources of credit that will comprise the 180 quarter-hours of credit needed for the Bachelor's Degree. This includes

designation of transfer credits accepted, credit for life/work experience, credit for independent study to be completed as part of the contract, and credit for required formal coursework. The form also includes the contract fee for program support, and signature blocks for those persons who must approve the contract before it becomes official. These include the student, the faculty advisor, the chairperson of the department carrying academic responsibility for the student's work, the Dean of the College or School governing the department, and the Director of the External Degree Program.

The next page of the Educational Contract lists transfer credit, including colleges previously attended by the student, with inclusive dates, and the credit hours earned in each institution. The total number of transfer credits accepted is indicated at the bottom of the page.

The next page expresses documented life/work experience. Employment is listed first, with the student's relevant work experiences in reverse chronological order. The next section includes continuing education, which encompasses noncredit activities sponsored by institutions of higher learning, employers, or other sources. Following that is a description of licenses, awards, and organizational memberships. The next major section under "Documented Life/Work Experience" describes demonstrated competencies. This section designates a level of competency for each competency identified, then lists each competency statement as it appeared in the Evaluation Packet. Although no specific credit hours are attached to any given competency or particular work experience, the number of credits awarded for documented life/work experience is expressed as a total figure at the end of that section.

The next portion of the Educational Contract gives the details of independent study. A brief statement about the goals and objectives of the independent study project is written by the faculty advisor. Next, the independent study to be attempted is listed by department number, title and nature of the project, and the number of credits to be awarded for each project. At the bottom of the page, the total number of credits expected to be earned through independent study is expressed.

The next page of the Educational Contract describes "Formal Coursework" to be completed. Specific courses designated by the advisor and the student as necessary for the completion of the degree are listed by department and specific course title. This list may include relevant coursework completed at FIU prior to enrollment in the External Degree Program. The credits to be earned for each course are listed, and the total is given at the bottom of the page.

The final page of the Educational Contract is reserved for narrative comment. In this section the faculty advisors states the broad, long-range goals of the student, the objectives of his or her educational program, and the specific behavioral changes or increased knowledge that the student will be expected to demonstrate upon completion of the program.

Although the contract and summary sheet provide space for independent study and formal coursework, there is no fixed formula, in most areas, for the way in which the student must complete his or her degree program. Most students undertake some formal coursework, but it is not required in the majority of programs. There is usually a mix of independent study and formal coursework.

When the contract is completed and signed by all accountable parties, it becomes the

governing document for all work attempted by the student under the aegis of the External Degree Program. Upon acceptance of the Educational Contract, the student moves into the Contracted Period.

E. CONTRACTED PERIOD

The Contracted Period is the period of time in which the student is completing the requirements of the Educational Contract. The initial contract drawn up for the student and the program support fee of \$350 cover the first year of work toward the completion of the degree. The student proceeds at his or her own pace, except in those cases where formal coursework is required. In such cases, it is necessary for the student to conform to what may be perceived as the more mundane elements of learning involved with classroom courses, such as class meetings, homework assignments, and examinations. Most faculty members will allow an External Degree student to carry a grade of "Incomplete" on his record for an indefinite period to allow integration of formal coursework with independent study. Many students graduate within the first contract year, depending on the amount of work remaining and the amount of time the student can devote to educational pursuits. If the work is not completed at the end of the first year, a contract renewal form is signed and a renewal fee of \$100 is paid to cover the second year of the contracted period. The student may take up to ten years to complete his or her educational contract, but annual renewal of the contract is required to keep it active.

The Educational Contract is not a rigid document. It is possible for a student, with his or her advisor's approval, to designate other formal coursework or to alter the nature of the independent study described as long as the new work meets the requirements of the degree and the overall learning objectives of the student. The most frequent reason for modification of the contract, however, is a change in the student's learning objectives or employment.

During the contracted period the student meets with the faculty advisor as needed or as indicated in the Educational Contract. Those students who require a greater measure of supervision may have regular meetings with their advisors; others who are extremely self-directed may require very little supervision and may meet with their advisors seldom during the contracted period. The student and the faculty advisor may agree that the student will contact the faculty advisor at regular intervals, or as needed. In some cases, the faculty advisor may occasionally contact the student and check on his or her progress. The only time students are routinely contacted during the Contracted Period is near the end of the contract year when they are asked if they wish to renew their contracts for an additional year, and are told how and where to pay the fee. Students are routinely notified by the External Degree Program office of the deadline and procedures for application for graduation.

F. GRADUATION

Early in each academic quarter during the contracted period, the student receives a form from the External Degree Program office advising him or her of the necessary procedures and deadlines for graduation. This notification combines the requirements of the External Degree Program with those of the Office of Registration and Records. Early in the quarter in which

the student expects to complete all required work, he or she obtains a standard Application for Graduation from the Office of Registration and Records, completes the form, and returns it to the Office of Registration and Records where it is processed. The External Degree Program is informed that the student has filed for graduation. About two weeks before graduation, the faculty advisor receives a record of the student's transfer credit, life/work experience, and completed coursework along with a Certification of Graduation. The faculty advisor is expected to review the record and the Educational Contract and to indicate whether the student is certified for graduation. Faculty advisors frequently meet with students to review the records, the educational contract, and the work in progress. If the faculty advisor is satisfied that all criteria have been met, he or she will sign the certificate indicating that the student is totally prepared for graduation. If there is still work in progress, however, the faculty advisor may indicate on the form that, upon completion of designated work in progress, the student is certified for graduation.

Once the faculty advisor has certified the student for graduation, the certification form is signed by the department chairperson and the Dean of the School or College, and forwarded to the External Degree Program. The External Degree Program updates its records and forwards the Certification of Graduation to the Office of Registration and Records.

The student then receives all routine notifications issued by the University relative to graduation, including commencement date, deadlines for robe rental, and how and where to obtain a class ring. A student who does indeed graduate during the quarter in which he or she has applied may participate in commencement with the class of the University which graduates that quarter, according to his or her own inclinations. The diploma indicates the School or College in which he or she was studying and the degree which is being awarded. The process by which the student obtains the diploma and the appearance of the diploma itself are no different from those of any other student who completes the traditional program of the University.

If, however, the student does not complete the work in progress by the end of the quarter, he or she simply reapplies for graduation again at a later date and the process is repeated. The External Degree Program notice regarding graduation asks students who apply for graduation to notify their faculty advisors that they have initiated the process, in order to accomplish whatever internal review the faculty advisor may expect. Therefore, faculty advisors often ignore the request for Certification of Graduation unless they also hear from the student that he or she is ready to graduate. It is not uncommon for a student to apply for graduation for several quarters in succession. External Degree students, the majority of whom are employed full-time, tend to set unrealistically high expectations of the time they will need to complete the entire program and, more specifically, their independent study projects.

G. TRANSCRIPTS

When the External Degree Program is notified that a student has been certified for graduation, a transcript is generated for that student on the master computer tape. FIU uses a narrative transcript format for its External Degree students (Appendix C, p. 47). The language of the transcript, however, is not developed at the time of graduation but has existed since the

time of the student's contract negotiation. A significant advantage of the competency-based taxonomy used in the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet is the adaptability of the language of the competency statements to the preparation of Educational Contracts and transcripts which reflect credit for prior learning. Use of the competency-based Evaluation Packet at FIU includes transferring the general competency statements from the Evaluation Packet's Competency Evaluation Summary Form directly to that part of the student's Educational Contract that describes credit for prior learning and the sources of that credit. The same process is applied to the preparation of transcripts based on competency rather than the accrual of credit hours. When the Educational Contract is fulfilled and the student graduates, a Xerox copy of the Educational Contract is sent to the Computer Center of the University, where it is key-punched directly into the master tape. The resulting printout is an official transcript which, like the Educational Contract, first lists undergraduate transfer credit granted, then documented life/work credit, then independent study credit, ending with formal coursework.

At the present time, the External Degree Program does not have the capability of maintaining a transcript from the time the student enters the program through graduation. As a result, a student has no official transcript until he or she graduates. If, however, a student requires a transcript prior to graduation (e.g., for a job application or for admission to graduate school), a transcript can be produced upon request. In such cases, the student's Educational Contract is typed onto a transcript form, and the work not yet completed is listed as work in progress.

III. DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Revision of the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet

An early priority for the CAEL Research Committee at FIU is partial revision of the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet. At the start of the Operational Models Project, when the Evaluation Packet went into full utilization, some potential weaknesses had been tentatively identified from limited trial use. The first of these centers around the use of the rating scale.

The rating scale was designed to include five levels, from the lowest to the highest degrees of mastery in order to facilitate the precise specification of competencies. One concern in the developmental stages was that a competency would not be identified as a competency unless it had been demonstrated at the average level or above when measured against performance levels of beginning baccalaureate practitioners. A year of monitoring the application of the rating scale and discussion with students and faculty advisors have yielded the fact that those who identify competencies for the Packet tend to discard, after brief consideration, those which have not been demonstrated at the average level or above. As a result, only the three highest categories of the rating scale have been widely used.

A second major concern has turned out to be the language used in writing competency statements. In developing its revised taxonomy of cognitive competencies, the Committee believed that simplifying and condensing Bloom's taxonomy for use within an educational setting would yield a tool that would be easily understood and applied by faculty advisors throughout the university. Although evaluators appear to have little difficulty in identifying competencies from work experiences and in writing general competency statements about them, most faculty advisors and virtually all students have had difficulty dealing with the four levels of competency as stated on the Competency Evaluation form. For example, the sample "Evaluation Packet for Barbara Jay" (see pp. 36-37 of Appendix A) lists as a general competency statement, "Developing training programs for a crisis intervention center operated by a county mental health association." Under the levels of competency, the same sentence is used four times to describe each level of competency, as follows: Level I: Knows and comprehends, "the methods of developing a training program for a crisis intervention center operated by a county mental health association." Level II reads: "Can apply. . ." and repeats the rest of the sentence quoted above. The fact that Barbara Jay was given a rating of 4 for that competency at every level indicates that she did know about developing training programs for crisis intervention centers. However, the repetition of the same sentence for every level of competency does not reveal demonstrated evidence that she progressed from Level I, that of knowing and comprehending, to Level IV, that of using analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. To make matters worse, faculty evaluators not well-grounded in educational theory have had difficulty in distinguishing between one level and the next because of the educational jargon in the materials. The projected revision of the Competency Evaluation Form which is currently under consideration would retain the general competency statement (i.e., "developing training programs for a crisis intervention center operated by a county mental health association"), but two changes relating to levels of

competency would be made.

First, the jargon would be eliminated. Level I would read, "Knows and understands the methods of developing a training program for a crisis intervention center," in place of "knows and comprehends." Level II might be, "Knows how to do," rather than, "Can apply." Instead of "Can analyze, synthesize, and evaluate," at Level III, the revision would be, "Can describe the use of knowledge acquired from one source in another situation." Level IV would extend that level to say, "Has used knowledge gained from one source in another situation." Although this changes the language of the four levels of competency without altering the basic meaning, it does not provide any additional information about how those levels were demonstrated. It is proposed that the competency statements be written to *qualify* how the level of competency was demonstrated.

In the case of Barbara Jay, it might be appropriate to say at Level I, "Knows and understands the methods of developing a training program for a crisis intervention center," as *demonstrated by* informal oral examination by the assessor. Level II, which now reads, "Can apply," would read, "Knows how to develop a training program for a crisis intervention center as *demonstrated by* the establishment of one program in each of two counties." Similarly, Level III would read, "Can describe the use of knowledge gained from one source in other situations as *demonstrated by* answering a series of hypothetical questions posed by the assessor to elicit that information." Level IV would read, "Has used knowledge gained from one source in a new situation as *demonstrated by* the development of a training program in early crisis intervention for the employees of a public housing authority." (See p. 25.)

The Committee now feels that decoding the competency statement, and adding specific qualifiers to indicate how the competencies were demonstrated would eliminate the need for a rating scale, which has not proved to be very useful.

The problem of unbalanced application of the rating scale has already been discussed. A close look at the components of the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet reveals the potential for one to be tempted to use the various combinations of numbers which result from applying the rating scale to each competency statement to determine an award of credit for prior learning, even though that was neither intended nor deemed desirable.

As can be noted from Appendix A, the Competency Evaluation Summary Sheet lists the numerical rating for every level of competency for each of the nine competencies ascribed to Barbara Jay. This yields a total number for each competency statement, plus a total of the number of ratings at each classification (1 through 5). All of this information is expressed as grand totals at the bottom of the page, yet there has never been any attempt by the Committee to link the numbers used in the rating process to an eventual award of credit. In fact, the Committee has persisted in separating the actual competencies from the decision-making process used to determine an award of credit on the grounds that it was beyond the scope of the task of the Committee.

In the presence of all those numbers, however, it is understandable that some faculty advisors would be influenced to incorporate numerical ratings drawn from the Evaluation Packet into a formula for determining the award of credit. At the time of implementation of the Prior



FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

TAMiami TRAIL • MIAMI, FLORIDA 33144

Student Barbara Jay

EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM COMPETENCY EVALUATION FORM

Major Social Work

DATE: 03/14/75

EVALUATOR:

Jane Muller

POSITION:

Associate Professor,
Social Work Program

JOB OR COURSE TITLE:

Associate Director,
Mental Health Ass'n. of
Dade County, Florida

INFORMATION ACQUIRED
FROM FOLLOWING SOURCES:

- ☒ INTERVIEW
☒ WRITTEN MATERIAL
☒ STUDENT NARRATIVE
☒ THIRD PARTY TESTIMONY
☐ OBSERVATION
☐ WRITTEN TEST

Jane Muller
EVALUATOR SIGNATURE

Barbara Jay
STUDENT SIGNATURE

GENERAL COMPETENCY Developing training programs for a crisis intervention center operated by a county mental health association

LEVEL OF COMPETENCY

I. KNOWS AND UNDERSTANDS the methods of developing a training program for a crisis intervention center

AS DEMONSTRATED BY informal interview with an expert evaluator

II. KNOWS HOW TO develop a training program for a crisis intervention center

AS DEMONSTRATED BY the establishment of one training program in each of two counties

III. KNOWS HOW TO USE KNOWLEDGE GAINED FROM ONE SOURCE IN OTHER SITUATIONS

AS DEMONSTRATED BY answering a series of questions posed by the evaluator to elicit this information

IV. HAS USED KNOWLEDGE GAINED FROM ONE SOURCE IN OTHER SITUATIONS

AS DEMONSTRATED BY the development of a training program in crisis intervention for the employees of a public housing authority

CREDIT
12

Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet, neither the External Degree Program nor the CAEL Research Committee had established a fixed formula for tying the award of credit, through the use of the Packet, to the assessment process. The Committee has been concerned from the outset about the potential development of several *de facto* formulae for awarding credit, and is taking preventive action in two ways: (a) the elimination of excessive use of numbers in the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet, and (b) the development of a workable formula for linking the award of credit to assessment for all disciplines.

Linking Competency Statements to the Award of Credit

Linking a specific award of credit to specific competencies has been awaiting the Committee's decision on its approach to the issue of the relative scope, size, and significance of individual competency statements. After a year of trial use, the Committee sees no reason why each competency must be absolutely equal in size and value, and has abandoned its recommendation to faculty advisors that it is important to break down larger competencies into more specific, similarly-sized subcompetencies.

In contrast, the Committee now proposes, in its revised version of the Competency Evaluation Form, to have faculty advisors remain relatively unconcerned about the size of competencies at the time the general competency statement is written. Faculty advisors and students will be asked to write a general competency statement, and to write about each of the four levels of the competency attained, including qualifiers demonstrating that the competency exists at that level. Having completed that process, the faculty advisor will be asked to think in terms of a five-quarter-hour credit course in evaluating the credit worthiness of a competency. It is important to note that this does not imply that each competency is worth five quarter-hours of credit. Faculty advisors will be expected to use the scope of the average five quarter-hour course as a benchmark against which to measure the size and scope of competency statements. In short, they will be asked to think about what they might teach in a hypothetical five-quarter-hour course on the subject of the competency in question and to relate the scope of that imaginary course to the scope and size of the competency being evaluated. If the competency is relatively small in scope, covering only a portion of the probable scope of a five-quarter-hour course, then two credits might be an appropriate award. If, however, the student has demonstrated a sophisticated competency in exemplary fashion at all four levels to a degree that would be acceptable in a graduate program, then the faculty advisor, using the benchmark of the scope of a five-quarter-hour undergraduate class, could award ten or more quarter-hours for that particularly complex competency. Therefore, the new Competency Evaluation Form would include a general competency statement, a place to indicate the award of credit for that specific competency and a discussion and documentation of the four levels of the competency in standard English, and it would entirely eliminate the rating scale. As a result, the Competency Evaluation Summary sheet would list each general competency statement, the award of credit tied directly to that competency, plus a grand total of quarter-credit-hours awarded.

Faculty Development

A second major focus for the future is faculty development. The first level of necessary

faculty training is to ensure that every faculty advisor who is involved with the External Degree Program fully understands the intent, the use, and the impact of the revised Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet. The Committee expects advisors to adapt its use to fit personal *modus operandi*, as well as the particular demands of their academic discipline, rather than to view it as a series of lines and boxes into which a student and his or her competencies must be fit in order to conform to the size, shape, and form of the instrument.

The remainder of our faculty development work will focus on the four major functions of the faculty advisor in the context of the External Degree Program--counseling, negotiating, assessing, and designing independent study packages.

Our faculty development activity at present focuses on a particular target group, the faculty members in the Liberal Studies Program. Faculty advisors in Liberal Studies have been more resistant than others to the idea of competency-based assessment of prior learning. They are wont to maintain that one cannot write competency statements about philosophers, that a set of competency statements about a poet can't establish the quality of the poetry produced, and that identifying the competencies used to produce a painting does not yield necessary aesthetic information about paintings themselves.

In addition, the Liberal Studies faculty has shown less tolerance than other groups with the educational jargon involved in putting the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet to use. Since the Committee admits to having no good reason for using educational jargon where standard English will suffice, and since it expects more students to become involved in writing competency statements about themselves, the Committee is quite willing to accommodate to that need.

One feature of the resistance displayed by the Liberal Studies faculty has been an almost reflexive rejection of what is viewed as an excessively behavioristic approach to assessment at the expense of humanistic or aesthetic elements. The Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet itself was initially designed to allow faculty evaluators to describe cognitive competencies and the behaviors by which they are demonstrated in a specific and standardized way, without requiring the resulting competencies to fit into a mold any more constraining than the requirement that the competencies be consistent with those expected of a graduate in a given student's discipline.

The Committee expects that continued dialogue in standard English, coupled with deeper exploration of the link between product assessment and competency-based assessment, will strengthen the quality, quantity, and enthusiasm of participation in the Liberal Studies area.

The Identification of Standards

Perhaps the most important finding of the Committee during the life of the Operational Models project was its insight into the application of standards in the assessment of students. The Committee's realization that standards, both Explicit and Implicit, are applied from the time of inquiry through the official assessment process gives the Committee new insight in the development of more effective study in the area of the identifying and applying standards.

Integration of Competency-based Assessment with Competencies by Discipline

To date, the Committee has focused its efforts within parameters defined by the learning objectives of the student and the demands of the student's academic program. It was the intent of the Committee to integrate the use of the Evaluation Packet, which describes unique competencies that may not yet be part of a given disciplinary curriculum, with the development of specific sets of competencies that can be ascribed to academic disciplines. One value in the FIU program, which will not be sacrificed, is the importance of using the External Degree Program as a vehicle for bringing new learning to the FIU curriculum. It is a constant source of joy to those who work with External Degree students to stumble upon that special student who has made a vocation or avocation out of an activity so new and esoteric, or combining so many disciplines, that the student himself is the only person who can speak with authority about that activity. It is with some pride that we state that we have a way to describe, evaluate, and credit those special competencies, even though there may be no equivalents for them in the university catalog.

At the same time, the Committee recognizes the fact that a social worker cannot be constructed out of a series of unrelated, obscure, rarely-applied competencies. Even though these competencies may fall within the discipline of social work, unless they include the broader knowledge of the field, they do not, in total, make a social worker. If a student presents a comprehensive set of experiences and learning outcomes that focus on only one facet of the total discipline, a degree cannot be awarded unless he or she has also attained the remainder of the basic knowledge and skills required of a baccalaureate practitioner in the discipline. Because of this conviction, combined with the Committee's interest in preserving the right to grant credit for unique and innovative competencies, the Committee has looked to the academic disciplines with which it works most closely to develop sets of basic competencies that it might look to and use as indicators in the assessment of incoming External Degree students. This request has placed an unexpected demand on some academic units that have not taken a competency-based approach to their own disciplines before. Since most traditional academic programs are based on the accrual of credit hours, student learning is usually assessed in small increments in the form of a final examination at the end of each class. There is no attempt made at the time of graduation to assess all of the traditional student's learning, to identify all of his or her competencies, or to determine, in fact, whether he or she is truly a member in good standing of the chosen discipline.

As the Committee waits for the academic units to identify the critical competencies in each of their areas, lending what support it can, it continues to search for a process by which it might integrate the two clusters of competencies with the use of the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet.

One possible model which has been suggested, but not necessarily accepted as ideal, is referred to as the "Chinese Menu Method" and will serve to clarify our objectives. This model proposes that a given discipline--Social Work, for example--determines sets of fixed competencies within the discipline at varying levels of importance. Those competencies which are considered absolutely basic and represent the fundamental competencies of a Social Work graduate would be placed in "Column A." For purposes of discussion, we will assume that there are

ten "Column A Competencies." The second level would include those competencies that may comprise specialties within social work not required of every Social Worker. These become the "Column B Competencies." "Column C" would be reserved for those competencies unique to the student--those which add to the body of knowledge of Social Work and distinguish that student from every other Social Work practitioner.

One might show the student this educational menu when he or she enters the program and make clear that upon graduation he or she must demonstrate 10 from Column A, as the basic and mandatory competencies of the discipline; 10 from Column B, which may be comprised of 60 or more competencies of a highly specialized nature; and contribute 5 to Column C, based on his or her own experiences. The Column C competencies would obviously be identified and described in the Evaluation Packet. It is likely that an entering student could demonstrate some or all of the competencies in Column A and Column B at the time of the initial assessment. The independent study program for each student would be designed to provide the necessary numbers of competencies in each category from A through C.

This model has not been tried, nor even widely shared, but it is an example of a way to combine the use of the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet with a set of fixed competencies provided as standard by the academic unit.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The CAEL Research Committee at FIU is aware that the bulk of the research portion of the CAEL Operational Models Project was to take place in the first twelve months, with the remaining six months to be devoted to dissemination of the results of the work.

The most significant accomplishments under the aegis of this project were the trial use and revision of the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet, the development of a Benchmark Formula for linking described competencies with an award of credit for prior learning, and the analysis of its systems which yielded the surprising finding that, contrary to our assumption, competencies are described and evaluated at the Contract Negotiation stage *as a result of* the application of standards, rather than *prior to* the application of standards.

The Committee has been less successful in developing means by which the Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Packet may be integrated with the use of disciplinary competencies to be used as indicators in the application of standards. It is possible that the difficulty in arriving at mutually agreeable indicators in each discipline stems from our use of a competency-based method of assessing prior learning within the overall context of an institution that bases its traditional academic programs on time and the accrual of credit hours. The Committee has not encountered conflict in this regard, but has encountered a lack of experience and perspective when it comes to competency-based education.

Because the Committee sees unmet need in the areas of faculty development, identification of disciplinary indicators, and the identification of explicit and implicit standards in the External Degree process, it plans to continue its research efforts through the dissemination stage of the Operational Models Project. A subcommittee of the Research Committee, composed of the two co-chairpersons, the External Degree Program Director, and a faculty advisor, will work directly with FIU's Department of Conferences and Short Courses in the development of its dissemination effort. The Chairperson of the Department of Conferences Planning Committee for the Regional conference also serves as a Co-Chairperson of the CAEL Research Committee at FIU, therefore the Committee anticipates no loss of continuity by approaching the dissemination effort in a cooperative fashion. This specialization on the part of a portion of the Committee should allow the remainder of the Committee to devote its full attention to what it sees as critical priority activities--for the Operational Models Project and for further development of the External Degree Program.

APPENDIX A

SELECTED PAGES FROM A
COMPLETED PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL
LEARNING EVALUATION PACKET: "BARBARA JAY"



FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
TAMiami TRAIL • MIAMI, FLORIDA

EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM COMPETENCY EVALUATION FORM

STUDENT BARBARA JAY

MAJOR Social Work

DATE: 03/14/75

EVALUATOR:

Jane Muller

POSITION:

Assoc. Prof.
Social Work

JOB OR COURSE TITLE:

Assoc. Director
Mental Health
Ass'n., Dade
County

INFORMATION ACQUIRED FROM
THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

☒ INTERVIEW

☒ WRITTEN MATERIALS

☒ STUDENT NARRATIVE

☒ THIRD PARTY TESTIMONY

☐ OBSERVATION

☐ WRITTEN TEST

Jane Muller
EVALUATOR'S SIGNATURE

GENERAL COMPETENCY research and report writing on mental health problems and institutions which deal with them

LEVEL OF COMPETENCY:

I. KNOWS AND COMPREHENDS the principles and techniques of researching and report writing on mental health problems and institutions which deal with them

II. CAN APPLY the principles and techniques of researching and report writing on mental health problems and institutions which deal with them

III. CAN ANALYZE, SYNTHESIZE, & EVALUATE the principles and techniques of researching and report writing on mental health problems and institutions which deal with them

IV. CAN USE ANALYSIS, SYNTHESIS, & EVALUATION the principles and techniques of researching and report writing on mental health problems and institutions which deal with them

HAS NOT DEMONSTRATED THE COMPETENCY IN QUESTION	HAS DEMONSTRATED THE COMP IN QUESTION AT A BELOW AVERAGE LEVEL	HAS DEMONSTRATED THE COMP IN QUESTION AT AN AVERAGE LEVEL	HAS DEMONSTRATED THE COMP IN QUESTION AT AN ABOVE AVERAGE LEVEL	HAS DEMONSTRATED THE COMP IN QUESTION AT OR NEAR HIGHEST LEVEL
1	2	3	4	5
				X
				X
				X
			X	



FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

TAMiami TRAIL • MIAMI, FLORIDA 33144 • (305) 223-2300

EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM COMPETENCY EVALUATION SUMMARY SHEET

DATE: March 14, 1975

STUDENT: BARBARA JAY

SS#: 000-00-0000

MAJOR: Social Work

EVALUATOR(S): Jane Muller

		KNOWS AND COMPREHENDS	CAN APPLY	CAN ANALYZE, SYNTHESIZE, EVALUATE	CAN USE ANALYSIS SYNTHESIS, AND EVALUATION	TOTAL
	GENERAL COMPETENCIES:					
1.	Coordinating field placements for					
	students in a social science/service					
	curriculum	5	5	5	4	19
2.	Evaluating students and placement					
	settings in a social/science/service					
	curriculum	5	5	5	4	19
3.	Teaching/facilitating students in					
	groups settings in a social science					
	service curriculum	4	4	3	3	14
4.	Developing a training program for					
	a crisis intervention center opera-					
	ted by a county mental health asso-					
	ciation	4	4	4	4	16
5.	Consulting/advising staff members					
	and other agencies on program plan-					
	ning and implementation for a county					
	mental health association	4	4	3	1	12

(Continued on following page)



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TAMIAMI TRAIL • MIAMI, FLORIDA 33144 • (305) 223-2300

EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM COMPETENCY EVALUATION SUMMARY SHEET

DATE: March 14, 1975

STUDENT: BARBARA JAY

SS#: 000-00-0000

MAJOR: Social Work

EVALUATOR(S): Jane Muller

		KNOWS AND COMPREHENDS	CAN APPLY	CAN ANALYZE, SYNTHESIZE, EVALUATE	CAN USE ANALYSIS, SYNTHESIS, AND EVALUATION	TOTAL
	GENERAL COMPETENCIES:					
6.	Administering a public relations					
	program for a county mental health					
	association and suicide prevention					
	center	5	5	5	5	20
7.	Researching and report writing on					
	mental health problems and insti-					
	tutions that deal with them	5	5	5	4	19
8.	Planning and implementing a suicide					
	prevention center for a city mental					
	health association	5	5	4	3	17
9.	Building community awareness of and					
	support for a suicide prevention					
	center for a city mental health					
	association	5	5	3	1	14
	TOTAL	42	42	37	29	150

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE EDUCATIONAL CONTRACT

EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM

SCHOOL OF INDEPENDENT STUDIES EDUCATIONAL CONTRACT

NAME: SAMPLE CONTRACT SOCIAL SECURITY NO: 087-18-2581

BIRTH PLACE: FINANCIAL AID: N/A
Brooklyn, New York
BIRTH DATE: V.A. BENEFITS: N/A
14/24/26

CONTRACT DATES: April 1, 1976 - March 31, 1977
COLLEGE, SCHOOL: Health and Social Services

DEGREE: Bachelor of Science

MAJOR: Criminal Justice

AREA OF CONCENTRATION: Administration

SUMMARY:

TRANSFER CREDIT	90.0
LIFE/WORK EXPERIENCE	
LOWER DIVISION	
UPPER DIVISION	17.0
INDEPENDENT STUDY	8.0
FORMAL COURSEWORK	65.0
TOTAL	180.0

CONTRACT FEE AND PROGRAM SUPPORT \$350.00

THIS FEE DOES NOT COVER ANY FORMAL COURSES TAKEN AS A
REGULAR OR SPECIAL STUDENT AT ANY INSTITUTION OF HIGHER
EDUCATION.

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

FACULTY ADVISOR SIGNATURE

DEAN, SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES

ACADEMIC DEPT. CHAIRPERSON

DABNEY G. PARK, JR., DIRECTOR
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM

**SCHOOL OF INDEPENDENT STUDIES
EDUCATIONAL**



TRANSFER CREDIT

SAMPLE CONTRACT

CODING	DEPARTMENT NO	DESCRIPTION	CREDIT EARNED QUARTER HOURS
		Miami-Dade Comm Coll. Miami, Fla. A.A. Degree 1975	90.0
TOTAL			90.0

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF INDEPENDENT STUDIES
EDUCATIONAL

EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM
CONTRACT



DOCUMENTED LIFE/WORK
EXPERIENCE :

SAMPLE CONTRACT

CODING	DEPARTMENT NO	DESCRIPTION	CREDIT EARNED QUARTER HOURS
		<u>Employment</u> -Director of Security; Carillon Hotel; Franklin Plaza Apt.; Miami Beach, Fla. 1950-1954 -Captain, New York City Police Dept.; New York, New York; 1954-1971 <u>Licenses, Awards, and Organizations:</u> -Teacher's Certificate; State of Florida; 1974-1984 <u>Specific Competencies Demonstrated</u> -Knows and comprehends, can apply, can analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the principles and practices of: -Developing an organizational manual for use in office management for New York City Police Dept. -Planning and directing a budget of \$225,000 for a private security corpora- tion funded by a government agency. -Arbitrating community misconduct alle- gations against New York City Police Officers -Supervising staff supervisors of an operational unit in a large police agency -Knows and comprehends; can apply; can analyze, synthesize and evaluate; can use analysis, synthesis and evaluation in: -Directing a full-time security force for an HUD unit, New York City.	
TOTAL			17.0

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF INDEPENDENT STUDIES
EDUCATIONAL



EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM
CONTRACT

INDEPENDENT STUDY:

SAMPLE CONTRACT

ALL INDEPENDENT STUDY OVER 25 QUARTER CREDIT HOURS
MUST BE REGISTERED FOR AND PAID FOR THROUGH REGULAR
FIU QUARTERLY REGISTRATION PROCEDURES.

STUDY PLAN: Will participate in an Independent Study plan that involves teaching, developing, implementing, and evaluating Criminal Justice curricula.

CODING	DEPARTMENT NO.	TITLE	GRADE	CREDIT EARNED QUARTER HOURS	COMMENTS
	CPJ 496	Independent Study Student will develop curricula, coordinate field and classroom activities, teach and evaluate student progress in the following titled courses in the A.A. program at Miami-Dade Community College, South Campus: LAE 264 Criminal Law I LAE 265 Criminal Law II Student will submit all written work prior to implementation of courses, and will be under supervision of academic credentialed critic.		8.0	
			Total	8.0	

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF INDEPENDENT STUDIES
EDUCATIONAL



EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM
CONTRACT

FORMAL COURSEWORK:

SAMPLE CONTRACT

CODING	DEPARTMENT NO	DESCRIPTION	GRADE	CREDIT EARNED QUARTER HOURS
	CRJ 303	Pro. and Jud. Policy Making	CR	5.0
	CRJ 401	Correction Philosophy	HC	5.0
	CRJ 430	Justice and Constitution	CR	5.0
	CRJ 301	Nature and Causes of Crime	A	5.0
	CRJ 302	Roles of Law Enforcement	A	5.0
	CRJ 313	Planning and Financial	A	5.0
	CRMM 325	Law and Hospitality Ind.	A	5.0
	CRJ 402	Criminal Justice Methods of Research		5.0
	CRJ 312	Management of Human Resources		5.0
	POS 343	Constitutional Law I		5.0
	CRJ 403	Methods of Institutional Change		5.0
	CRJ 440	Internship		10.0
TOTAL				65.0

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF INDEPENDENT STUDIES
EDUCATIONAL



EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM
CONTRACT

SAMPLE CONTRACT

NARRATIVE COMMENT:

_____ long-term career is to teach in the field of Criminal Justice. To enable him to move closer to that goal, he has stated the following educational objectives:

1. To equip himself with the tools necessary to teach in an academic institution.
2. To improve his skills in counseling with students.
3. To develop a deeper understanding of Criminal Law.
4. To develop a means of using his years of experience with the police department to improve the Criminal Justice educational process.

_____ educational program of study is developed to assist him in completing the above stated objectives.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE TRANSCRIPT

**PERMANENT
ACADEMIC
RECORD**



FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, MIAMI, FLA.
☐ TAMAMI CAMPUS - TAMAMI TRAIL, MIAMI, FLORIDA 33199
☐ INTERAMA CAMPUS - NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA 33181

INDEX PAGE SOCIAL SECURITY NO.
 SAMPLE TRANSCRIPT
 STUDENT NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)

BIRTH DATE M SEX

TEST INFORMATION:

STUDENT IS IN GOOD STANDING AND IS ELIGIBLE TO RETURN
 UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED. THIS TRANSCRIPT IS NOT OFFICIAL
 UNLESS IT BEARS THE EMBOSSED SEAL OF THE UNIVERSITY.

BASIS OF ADMISSION: ☒ TRANSFER
 COURSE IDENTIFIER
 P - NON-OCCUPATIONAL
 O - OCCUPATIONAL
 D - DUAL

COURSE TYPE:
 BLANK - INSTR. CR.
 O - OTHER EXT. CR.
 Z - CLEP

GRADING SYSTEM:
 A-EXCELLENT (4 G.P.) C-AVERAGE (2 G.P.) NC-NO CREDIT
 B-GOOD (3 G.P.) D-POOR (1 G.P.) CR-SATISFACTORY
 IN-INCOMPLETE AU-AUDIT NR-GRADE NOT REPORTED
 WI-WITHDREW FROM UNIVERSITY DR-DROPPED EM-CREDIT BY EXAM

COURSE TITLE	CR	CREDIT	EARNED	DEPT. NO.	COURSE TITLE	CR	CREDIT	EARNED
Transfer Credit					Knows and comprehends; can apply; can			
Miami-Dade Com. Col.					analyze, synthesize, and evaluate; can			
1974-1975			90.0		use analysis, synthesis, and evaluation			
		Total	90.0		in:			
Life/Work Experience					-Directing a full-time security force			
Employment:					for an HUD unit; New York City.			
-Director of Security; Carillon Hotel;							17.0	
Franklin Plaza Apt.; Miami Beach, Fla.						Total	17.0	
1950-1954.								
-Captain, New York City Police Dept.;				CRJ 496	Independent Study:			
New York, New York; 1954-1971					Independent Study			8.0
Licenses, Awards, Organizations:								
-Teacher's Certificate, State of				CRJ 303	Formal Coursework:			
Florida; 1974-1984					Pro. and Jud. Policy	CR		5.0
Specific Competencies Demonstrated:				CRJ 401	Making	HC		5.0
-Knows and comprehends, can apply;				CRJ 430	Correctional Philo.	CR		5.0
can analyze, synthesize, and evaluate				CRJ 301	Justice and Const.			
the principles and practices of:					Nature and Causes of			
-Developing an organizational manual				CRJ 302	Crime	A		5.0
for use in office management for New				CRJ 313	Roles of Law Enforce.	A		5.0
York City Police Dept.				CRJ 325	Planning and Financial	A		5.0
-Planning and directing a budget of				CRJ 312	Law. and Hosp. Ind.	A		5.0
\$225,000 for a private security corpor-				CRJ 312	Mgt. of Human Resource	A		5.0
ation funded by a government agency.				CRJ 402	Methods of CRJ Research	B		5.0
-Arbitrating community misconduct al-				POS 343	Const. Law; PWR	B		5.0
legations against New York City Police				CRJ 403	Inst. Change	A		5.0
Officers.				CRJ 440	Field Internship	B		10.0
-Supervising staff supervisors of an							Total	65.0
operational unit in a large police								
agency.								

* COURSE REPEATED IN SUBSEQUENT TERM

TRANSCRIPT

**PERMANENT
ACADEMIC
RECORD**



FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, MIAMI, FLA.
☐ TAMAMI CAMPUS - TAMAMI TRAIL, MIAMI, FLORIDA 33199
☐ INTERAMA CAMPUS - NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA 33181

INDEX

PAGE 2

SOCIAL SECURITY NO.

BIRTH DATE

M
SEX

TEST INFORMATION:

SAMPLE TRANSCRIPT
 STUDENT NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)

STUDENT IS IN GOOD STANDING AND IS ELIGIBLE TO RETURN
 UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED. THIS TRANSCRIPT IS NOT OFFICIAL
 UNLESS IT BEARS THE EMBOSSED SEAL OF THE UNIVERSITY.

BASIS OF ADMISSION:

☒ TRANSFER

COURSE IDENTIFIER

P - NON-OCCUPATIONAL
 O - OCCUPATIONAL
 D - DUAL

COURSE TYPE:

BLANK - INSTR. CR.
 O - OTHER EXT. CR.
 Z - CLEP

GRADING SYSTEM:

A-EXCELLENT (4 G.P.) C-AVERAGE (2 G.P.) NC-NO CREDIT
 B-GOOD (3 G.P.) D-POOR (1 G.P.) CR-SATISFACTORY

IN-INCOMPLETE
 WI-WITHDREW FROM
 UNIVERSITY

AU-AUDIT
 DR-DROPPED

NR-GRADE NOT REPORTED
 EM-CREDIT BY EXAM

NO.	NAME	DEPT.	NO.	IN	GRADE	CREDIT	CREDIT	EARNED
TOTALS								
	Transfer Credit					90.0		
	Life/Work Experience					17.0		
	Independent Study					8.0		
	Formal Coursework					65.0		
						180.0		
Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Awarded June 12, 1976								

* COURSE REPEATED IN SUBSEQUENT TERM

TRANSCRIPT